

SMART Goal Evaluation

Goal 1- Social media strategy (Instagram and LinkedIn) co-created with staff

I originally defined success through delivering a completed, structured strategy document (e.g. tone of voice or posting guidance) which is reviewed by staff and feedback which confirmed usability. What changed throughout the project was that my time was also pulled into other urgent organisational needs which meant strategy drafting wasn't a direct priority, and strategy had a broader meaning from simply content ideas to also being about systems e.g. policies and volunteer guidance.

Evidence regarding goal completion (based on each week):

- I completed an initial marketing audit and report as well as research for future strategy
- I gathered staff feedback through targeted interviews and consolidated it into a communications document which included content pillars and target audience
- I had a direct focus on tangible implementation of findings by refreshing Instagram branding e.g. logo and bio, explored Linktree and its associated challenges and began a social media policy and template for volunteers
- I completed a volunteer guidelines page and developed a content calendar, which helped turn earlier research and strategy work into something practical and sustainable
- I proposed a refreshed structure for 2026 annual report which made me think about how Logos NGO communicates its wider organisational impact
- I finalised the LinkedIn strategy report, including a posting schedule, content templates and implementation plan based on staff interviews and platform expectations

In the final weeks, I continued applying the strategy through practical content creation and volunteer engagement. For example, I filmed a behind-the-scenes recap of the volunteer room renovation and worked on Part 2 of the Polish Words: Volunteers vs Native Speaker content. I also worked with 10 new volunteers and discussed how they could contribute to the organisation's content and podcast development.

Leadership isn't about producing a perfect strategy on schedule but actually adapting to how the organisation works and creating practical tools such as guidelines so that others could consistently post after I left too. By the end of the LiA, I realised that the strategy was much broader than I initially expected as the most valuable outcome wasn't necessarily a single

finished document. It was the combination of research, guidelines, content structures, calendars and practical examples that could help Logos NGO communicate more consistently in the future.

Goal 2- 2-3 campaign concepts to increase youth engagement

Success meant developing campaign concepts which are produced and reviewed by staff and also documented feedback I could refer to. Operational needs or immediate partner deliverables such as the Social I.M.P.A.C.T report took priority over drafting campaign concepts earlier in the process.

Evidence regarding goal completion:

- Completed Campaign groundwork through audit/research and identifying communication gaps
- Conducted practical youth-facing content experiments with volunteers e.g. Meet the Volunteers Instagram infographic and edited reels about their experiences.
- Continued developing campaign ideas while thinking more strategically about what would actually engage young people. Rather than focusing on individual campaign concepts, I considered how content could reflect the people and experiences behind Logos NGO. This included volunteer-led content and continued development of ideas around storytelling and intercultural experiences
- I worked on the volunteer room renovation and created behind-the-scenes content around the process. This was a useful example of how an ordinary organisational activity could become engaging social media content when framed through people and storytelling
- Continued developing the Polish Words series which provided a simple yet interactive way of showcasing the organisation's intercultural environment.
- I also finalised podcast ideas based around different cultural backgrounds and hosted a meeting with new volunteers to discuss the concepts, gather feedback and explore how different people could contribute
- I facilitated a 'Think Before You Share' workshop for 15 participants, which extended my youth engagement work beyond social media campaigns into direct education and participation.

I've learnt that leadership means creating conditions for campaigns to work first e.g. volunteers or assets and that campaign development is just about coordination as it is about creativity. The final weeks of my LiA reinforced this because many of the strongest ideas emerged through working with volunteers as opposed to developing them independently. The podcast, for example, became stronger because I was able to hear different perspectives on how to improve the initial concept, and I directly involved people in shaping it. This highlighted to me that youth engagement should not simply be something an organisation communicates to young people as young people should have opportunities to shape the communication themselves.

Goal 3- digital communications toolkit (templates and planning structures)

Success was about creating 5-7 reusable templates/guidelines which would be completed and used by Week 6. Toolkit work became more urgent as I was actively managing volunteers and there were quality control issues such as the Canva template resizing earlier in Week 1 so it became a goal that was crucial and acted as a live leadership tool where others can contribute effectively.

Evidence regarding goal completion:

- In Week 2 I began shaping how we communicate into a reusable structure e.g. content pillars and audiences and delegated Canva template creation to volunteers and edited after to be utilised by future volunteers also
- Created toolkit components in week 3 such as brand guidelines, social media policy and templates which were tailored to events
- I completed the volunteer guidelines page and content calendar, strengthening the practicality of the toolkit. The guidelines gave volunteers clearer expectations surrounding content, while the calendar provided a structure for planning rather than solely relying on spontaneous planning
- I created LinkedIn content templates and a posting structure as part of the final LinkedIn strategy, meaning the toolkit developed across multiple platforms as opposed to having an Instagram focus
- I effectively tested the value of these systems in my final weeks by working with more volunteers. Meeting 10 volunteers and discussing content demonstrated why clear systems are important: when more people contribute, there needs to be enough structure for everyone to understand how they can contribute while still maintaining consistency.

Leadership, which is sustainable in nature, often looks like capacity building: creating templates and guidance so the organisation can keep improving once I leave. This was exemplified in the final weeks because I saw directly how quickly organisational capacity can increase when volunteers have clear roles and practical resources. Instead of trying to produce every piece of content myself, I increasingly focused on creating conditions where others could contribute. Consequently, this made the toolkit not just a collection of documents, but a live leadership tool.

Goal 4- Audience recommendation

The aim was to produce a written audience and messaging framework which was reviewed by volunteers/staff through feedback confirming clarity. My scope for the project widened from improving social posts to developing the organisational communications so had to incorporate local platform realities into the plan e.g. Telegram or EU social media regulations preventing TikTok being useful for the NGO.

Evidence regarding goal completion:

- Created a broader strategy research document in week 1
- Week 2 saw staff interviews as pivotal in executing this goal as the communication document outlined target audiences and content pillars. There was also direct involvement with audience via Instagram polls which reinforced the communication gaps I had identified
- Shift from simply producing content, e.g. open calls to improving Instagram identity in Week 3 through stories of the humans behind the account like volunteers. This showed messaging is actively refined, not simply analysed.
- In Week 4, I continued developing audience strategy through LinkedIn work, where I had to consider how the platform serves a different purpose and audience from Instagram. Staff interviews helped me understand what Logos wanted LinkedIn to achieve and allowed me to translate those expectations into practical content themes and a posting schedule.
- In Week 5 and 6, I increasingly tested the idea that youth audiences respond positively to authenticity and participation. Content such as the room renovation recap, Polish Word series and volunteer-led content ideas for Logos NGO's 10-year anniversary content helped shift the organisation's social media identity towards showing the humans behind Logos rather than only promoting formal opportunities

Leadership was about translating between stakeholders, e.g. staff, audience and volunteers, and turning ambiguity into shared clarity. The final week also reinforced the importance of understanding audiences through direct interaction. The podcast meeting with new volunteers allowed me to hear what people from different cultural backgrounds were interested in discussing, while the Think Before You Share workshop gave me direct experience facilitating learning with 15 young participants. I realised that audience research needs to be continuously tested through conversations, feedback, content performance, and direct participation. This was particularly important in a multilingual and intercultural NGO environment where there could not be one universal communication style.

Cross-Goal Reflection

My goals were appropriately ambitious for six weeks as they combined strategic outputs such as messaging and campaigns with capacity-building e.g. toolkit which would be beneficial for the NGO. Weeks 1-3 demonstrated that ambition is realistic only if there are flexible timelines and acceptance that progress will be iterative, as opposed to simply deliverable-driven.

The final weeks reinforced this significantly. I had initially expected the final stage of the LiA to involved mainly completing the outputs I had planned, but instead I continued balancing strategy work with organisational priorities, volunteer coordination, room renovation, workshop

preparation, podcast development and final presentations. This highlighted me that in a real-world context, the final weeks of a project are not necessarily quieter or more predictable. In fact, they can require greater prioritisation as multiple strands of work reach important stages at the same time.

The pattern I notice across outcomes is that adaptability is a constant necessity as urgent tasks like partner reporting reshaped my initial planning schedule. The progress was also not just from creative ideas but from the people involved in the process, such as feedback collection or clearer systems. I found the highest-impact work was often interviews, volunteer coordinations and policy creation which was extremely valuable. Some of the most meaningful outcomes were created through collaboration. Meeting new volunteers, hosting the podcast discussion, learning from Slovenian volunteers from Društvo Center za pomoč mladim (CPM), and facilitating the workshop all demonstrated that relationships were not separate from my project outputs; they were part of how the outputs became possible. I increasingly saw leadership as creating momentum between people rather than simply completing tasks independently.

When setting goals in complex contexts in the future, I will build buffer weeks explicitly into SMART goals to account for unexpected deliverables or relationship-building and also defining success as not only the final outputs but as adoption indicators e.g. in the context of this project volunteers can create on-brand posts using my proposed templates.

I would also define milestones around learning and implementation rather than only final deliverables. For example, a future goal could include testing a strategy with a small volunteer group before considering it complete. The final weeks showed me that something can look finished in theory but still needs testing in practice. Working with volunteers gave me an opportunity to see whether my guidance was understandable and whether people could contribute without needing constant direction. This is a more meaningful measure of sustainability than simply completing a document.

Systemic Change Reflection

Understanding the System:

The larger system I was operating in was a European youth NGO ecosystem shaped by Erasmus + project cycles, cross-country partnerships with limited organisational capacity. My role was being at the intersection of youth opportunity access, digital communications, and organisational development. The main barriers I faced was time fragmentation where staff were not always in the office or meetings which interrupted deep focus, different constraints and regulatory contexts which I had to learn quickly to apply to my project and leading volunteers which required systems, templates and patience not simply creative direction.

What surprised me about how the system functions in practice is that the communication impact depends less on the best marketing practices but rather the organisation's lived reality from information communication channels such as reliance on Telegram or Whatsapp groups, multilingual contexts and the need to integrate external partners' demands with internal strategy.

The experiences in Week4-6 strengthened this understanding because I saw how closely communication is connected to the organisation's individuals and physical environment. The volunteer room renovation, for instance, initially seemed separate from my digital communications work, but it demonstrated how organisational culture, physical spaces and communications are connected. The room was being transformed into a more welcoming space for volunteers, while the behind-the-scenes content I filmed allowed internal change to become part of the organisation's external storytelling. This showed me that an organisation's digital identity is influenced by what happens internally than being something that can be designed externally.

Meeting Slovenian volunteers from Društvo Center za pomoč mladim (CPM), also gave me a broadened understanding of the NGO ecosystem. Learning about another organisation's practices showed me that youth organisations across different countries can face similar challenges while responding to them differently depending on their resources, culture, and structure. It challenged the assumption that there is one ideal organisational or communications model that can be transferred between countries.

Leverage & Constraint:

A few examples of small actions which made a meaningful difference:

- Asking audience directly via polls gave immediate clarity and reassurance about what social media elements needed to change
- Delegating certain social media tasks to volunteers created new capacity for content beyond what I could produce in the time frame
- Improvements to Instagram identity e.g. logo/bio and editing reels which were simple made the page automatically more community-focused
- The 'Think Before You Share' workshop reached 15 participants and showed how communications work could directly support young people's media literacy.

However, progress did feel slow when there were competing responsibilities for the organisation and the challenge of coordinating input across staff with different schedules- as they all contribute to different projects which are overseas. The structural factors which shaped what was possible in six weeks were time constraints, NGO resource limitations, cross-cultural communication expectations and the project-driven nature of international youth work such as deliverables to partners arriving mid-week which took priority.

The final weeks also demonstrated another constraint: capacity depends heavily on people. New volunteers brought energy and ideas, but they also required onboarding, coordination and guidance. This meant that increasing participation does not automatically increase organisational capacity; systems need to exist to make participation effective. This reinforced why my toolkit and volunteer guidelines became increasingly important throughout the LiA.

Deeper change for future reference could be regarding embedding consistent communications processes: volunteer training and onboarding, institutionalised templates and policies, a stable content governance system, and a clear audience strategy which works across project cycles. This would grow the compound impact throughout the overall strategy.

Contribution in Context

Broadening speaking, my contribution is locally significant as I focused on strengthening the foundations for communications consistency and created groundwork towards a more intentional strategy, which would attract a larger youth audience. My work strengthened ongoing communications, tested volunteer-led community content, and surfaced gaps such as quality control and metrics interpretation cross-platform. Overall, my LiA realistically influenced organisational aspects such as processes or assets as well as narrative as the primary aim was to improve the way the organisation presents itself to potential volunteers.

The presentation of my final work to four of the eight co-founders was particularly important because it allowed me to communicate these contributions directly to organisational leadership. Rather than simply handing over files, I was able to explain what I had achieved, identify areas for further development, and suggest how the organisation could continue the work.

Continuity & Sustainability

For systematic change to continue, there needs to be staff commitment of using the toolkit/strategy, ongoing volunteering onboarding/training and clearer ownership of content decisions e.g. who approves posts. Logos NGO management are the ones responsible for long-term change but also to the wider volunteer community who would maintain social media posting consistency after my project.

There is definitely a pathway for future Scholars/partners to build on this work as my toolkit/strategy documents are resources which could then be used by future LiAs to focus on implementation and curation of campaigns using the foundation I've established.

Your Role Going Forward

This experience has demonstrated that systemic change can start with a small infrastructure through consistent communications systems which can further increase opportunity visibility and

accessibility- which influences who participate in events. Working at Logos NGO and making a direct impact on their communications has definitely inspired me to explore roles post-grad in this space, whether it be in ethical comms or youth-sector digital strategy. This has extended and challenged my love for digital marketing in a completely new capacity, and so organisational development has become a core focus for future career plans as opposed to content creation. I realised that I particularly enjoy work which sits between communication and people. Facilitating the podcast discussion, leading the workshop, meeting new volunteers and working collaboratively on the renovation all required different types of leadership from simply producing content. I enjoyed creating environments where other people could contribute, and this has made organisational development feel increasingly relevant to my future career.

Character, Leadership & Global Mindset

Who Am I Becoming as a Leader?

As a leader, I've realised it's less about executing a fixed plan and more about adapting whilst staying accountable through steering priorities, creating structures in ambiguity and aligning people to be the best version of themselves. This has challenged what a leader means theory wise that I learnt during my degree as in practice leadership was in smaller moments too: interviewing staff, translating across perspectives, improving systems and even addressing tense team dynamics professionally.

My leadership capabilities felt most challenges when interpreting metrics for platforms I was unfamiliar with i.e. Telegram, over committing to tasks and as a result managing competing deadlines. I learned that you can't control all variables, especially in a new environment, so the focus is leading by designing processes, communicating early, and making decisions which balance speed with care.

Character

The most important character dimensions included drive, judgement, and courage- especially when navigating difficult feedback situations and when leading volunteers. When these dimensions were tested, I stayed determined under pressure, escalated concerns with the rest of the team and practiced humility by seeking support with metrics as opposed to pretending I was an expert in the field as this process is all about learning and growth. I learnt that I could step into leadership roles earlier than expected e.g. overseeing volunteers and that I can successfully handle discomfort such as being in a new country or through difficult conversations, while still delivering the project outputs.

Change Maker Values

- Which values genuinely guided your decisions?

The values which guided my decisions were Brave, Curious, Fast and Determined. There was tension between Fast vs Good when urgent deliverables competed with quality or strategy depth. I navigated this by adapting priorities e.g. completing partner reporting whilst progressing foundational work e.g. guidelines or policy which protects quality over time.

This tension became strongest during Weeks 5 and 6. I had a short turnaround for finalising the podcast ideas and developing both the Think Before You Share workshop and the final presentation. I sometimes felt overwhelmed because I wanted to make each output as strong as possible. However, I had to make practical decisions about what could realistically be achieved within the available time. This helped me understand that Fast and Good do not necessarily have to be opposing values. Working quickly can be good leadership when it involves prioritisation, while producing high-quality work sometimes means accepting that something does not need to be perfect to be useful.

Capacities

People capacities which were most strengthened included interviews, volunteer leadership and relationship-building, whereas for process it involved time management under shifting demands. In terms of performance, auditing was crucial as well as content execution and iterative improvement. I still need to develop consistent focus time whilst dealing with tasks and deeper confidence in analytics interpretation, so metrics are a leadership tool rather than potential stressor.

Developing a Global Mindset

My work has shown how opportunity accessibility is directly mediated by communication systems as a lack of visible, culturally resonant information means projects like Erasmus+ don't reach the youth which could benefit most. I had to challenge my assumption that there is a 'best' platform or that a communication style is universal, e.g. through multilingual office realities or the importance of Telegram's importance in other regions.

Global citizenship is now more practical: it's not about just believing in intercultural connection but also doing the work of adapting communication, listening ethically and building inclusive systems which means more people can participate. My final weeks of the LiA made me understand that global citizenship also requires humility. I cannot assume that my own cultural perspectives, marketing knowledge, or university-based understanding are automatically transferable to another organisation or country. I need to listen to local people, understand the context they operate within, and adapt my approach accordingly. This is something I will carry into my future work, particularly if I continue working in ethical communications, youth development, or organisational strategy.

Photos of my favourite memories whilst on my LiA:





